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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

10 FEB 1993

Mm Docket 92-263

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

8310-MEA
CN9300322

RECEIVED

FEB 11 1993

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Honorable Sam Nunn
United States Senator
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Suite 1700
Atlanta, GA 30303

Dear Senator Nunn:

Thank you for your letter on behalf of William L. Parsons of Hartwell, Georgia. Your constituent has several complaints concerning his cable television service and his franchising authority.

The enclosure discusses the regulation of the matters your constituent has described. Current regulatory policies are based on the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984, which is still in effect.

I have also enclosed for your constituent's information a publication describing pending Commission proceedings under the 1992 Cable Act. Although these provisions are not yet in effect, the Commission is in the process of adopting new regulations for cable television, as mandated by Congress. Your constituent's comments will be placed in the record of this proceeding.

I trust that the foregoing and the enclosures are informative.

Sincerely,

Roy J. Stewart

Roy J. Stewart
Chief, Mass Media Bureau

Enclosures

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List A B C D E

Congressional

CONGRESSIONAL CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING SYSTEM
02/02/93

LETTER REPORT

CONTROL NO.	DATE RECEIVED	DATE OF CORRESP	DATE DUE	DATE DUE OLA(857)
9300322	02/02/93	01/22/93	02/15/93	

TITLE	MEMBERS NAME	REPLY FOR SIG OF
Senator	Sam Nunn	BC

CONSTITUENT'S NAME	SUBJECT
William L Parsons	Cable television complaints

REF TO	REF TO	REF TO	REF TO
MMB	Enf	CHI	

DATE	DATE	DATE	DATE
02/02/93	2/2	28	

REMARKS: Respond to the attention of Laura Johnson in the Atlanta, GA office.

2 FEB REC'D

SAM NUNN, GEORGIA, CHAIRMAN

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6050

January 22, 1993

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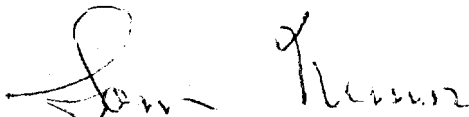
Ms. Linda Townsend Solheim
Office of Legislative Affairs
Federal Communications Commission
1919 M Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Ms. Solheim:

I recently received the enclosed constituent inquiry. Because of my desire to be responsive to all inquiries, I would appreciate your looking into this matter and providing me with any information you have available on this subject, of course, consistent with your established policies and procedures. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Your kind assistance is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,


Sam Nunn

Enclosure

SN/lkj

PLEASE REPLY TO:
75 Spring Street, S.W.
Suite 1700
Atlanta, Ga. 30303
Attn: Laura Johnson

William L. Parsons

Route 2, Box 2524 B Hartwell, Georgia 30643 (706) 376-6228

January 4, 1993

Mr. Mark Rekers, President
Ms. Phyllis Shestheonlyphyllisintheoffice, Supervisor Customer Service
Mr. Doug Hestheonlydougtheoffice, Supervisor Customer Service
USA Cablesystems Inc. , (Georgia)
35 Industrial Drive
Martinsville, Indiana 46151-8082

Lady and Gentlemen:

I will be up front with my complaints over service provided by USA Cablesystems or MW1 Cablesystems or both whichever the case may be.

1. Your cable line still resides on top of my lawn after twenty two (22) months of subscriber service.

2. Recent cable "downtime" includes the following:

A. Total Cable

1. Six (5) days Sept. 3rd through Sept. 7th.
2. Nine (9) days Dec. 2nd through Dec. 10th
3. Two (2) days Dec. 27th through Dec. 28th

B. Partial Cable

1. Seventeen days (17) Dec. 11th through Dec. 27th
HBO, PBS, CNN, AMC
2. One day (1) Dec. 28th
HBO

3. No one seems to know the exact entity providing us service. Our county commissioners don't know. My neighbors don't know. I don't know. Maybe you don't know. Who knows!

4. When I explained and deducted \$5.00 from my October invoice for cable "downtime " in September you simply added the \$5.00 on to my November invoice.

5. Your company has yet to acknowledge, or respond to my letters(10) or my telephone calls(46).

Allow me to briefly address these complaints for further clarification to those who will receive a copy of this correspondence.

Complaint # 1. *How would you like to cut, weed, plant, clean up after the dogs or otherwise maintain your property with 100 feet of cable line stretched across your lawn? For 22 months! During the 3rd week of December, I was greeted at my front door by a lady and a gentlemen representing themselves as employed by USA Cablesystems. There was a special on for new subscribers. The conversation went something like this:*

Them- "We have a special for new subscribers."

Me- "That's super but I'm sorry I'm already a subscriber."

Them- "We thought that long cable was going to your neighbors house."

Me- "No, my dogs chase their cat and they keep tripping over the cable."

Them- "USA should bury that cable."

Me- "Right."

Me- "You wouldn't have a special on to bury cable, would you?"

Them- "Sorry"

*Me- "How about a special on restoring HBO, PBS, CNN and AMC
Which have been out since the 2nd."*

*Them- "Sorry, but we will be glad to make a notation next to your name
on this computer listing to get you some service."*

*Me- "Does that computer listing contain all of your customers and
their addresses in Hart county, and if it does may I see it."*

Them- "Sure"

Complaint #2. *Everyone expects a certain amount of "downtime" to the forces of nature, but isn't this excessive? Why should it take six to ten days to make repairs? Within my memory, our telephone line has never been down for more than eight hours and that poor line has been abused with unmerciful disdain. We have been told that the three cable franchises in Hart county share one repair person. Considering numerous "downtime" occasions prior to September, I decided to get the USA's attention by deducting for September "downtime". My rationale, I fear, was much too complex and I apologize for the confusion it must have caused you. The formula was:*

Downtime as a percentage of total time X (times) monthly service charge.

Well, I can't say I blame you for just adding the \$5.00 back on my November invoice. So here goes for a simple approach to complaint # 2:

*I divide my social security number by my age.
From the result I subtract my zip code.
That product is divided by my area code.
Finally, I divide the last sum by 42% of the value of Hong Kong dollars
on Ash Wednesday past.*

*By either of the financial approaches used above, the result is \$26.09
and gratefully I have deducted this amount from my January bill. Should you enforce
another method, I am sure I will be happy with it.*

*Complaint # 3. Is it unreasonable for consumers of service to know the name and
address of the provider? Up until recent months we were relegated to a P.O. Box in
Houston Texas and an eight hundred number that was impossible to awaken. Now we
have a Martinsville, Indiana address housing people with strange names that won't
talk with us and an eight hundred number with a voice recording telling us to please
hold on because our telephone call is very important to you. We can successfully
rouse the recorded voice after an average of thirty six call attempts. Think of it.
That's three hundred ninety six touches on a touch tone phone without a radial
feature!*

Complaint # 4. See complaint # 2.

*Complaint # 5. I know full well that your company cannot respond to all complaints
immediately. But when the customer is left with an eight hundred number that's
difficult to reach and when reached refuses to give names of responsible service
representatives to contact, OUR CALL IS NOT IMPORTANT TO YOU! And why should it
be considering the absence of cable competition in this community? I am told all
three cable companies share an independent service person. Neither his name,
address or telephone number is available to county cable customers. In other words
Mr. Rekers we, the customer, have nowhere to go for service. Don't even think about
the eight hundred number, Mr. Rekers. We've tried that for twenty two months.*

*I am sorry that you refused to talk with me when I called last week. Mr. Rekers. I
explained to your assistant the nature of my call. Had I refused to talk to my
customers when I was in your position Mr. Rekers, I wouldn't have had any
customers. But I did Mr. Rekers because it was important to know how they viewed
me and the company I represented.*

Sincerely,

William L. Parsons

TO HART COUNTY COMMISSIONERS - The meeting of dissatisfied USA Cablesystems customers in October should have left a message. You should not only know the legal entity with whom the county holds a franchise but you should be provided regularly with a copy of Hart County subscribers by cable companies doing business in the county. It is pure rubbish that a computer listing is not available from USA. How otherwise could you determine the accuracy of your franchise fees? And your fees should be paid promptly. There should be some level of acceptable service in the franchise agreement. Repeated neglect of these service requirements would serve as grounds to disenfranchise the company. One more thought. A good many of USA's customers in this county continue to pay the full monthly charge for service despite USA's lack of service and "downtime". This is wrong!

*To: The Honorable Albert Gore, Senator (Tennessee)
The Honorable Sam Nunn, Senator (Georgia)
The Honorable Don Johnson, Congressman (Georgia)
The Honorable Edward Markey, Congressman (Massachusetts)
Chair, Sub Committee Telecommunications and Finance
The Honorable John D. Dingle, Congressman (Michigan)
Chair, Energy and Commerce
The Honorable Jack Brooks, Congressman (Texas)
Chair, Judiciary Committee
The Honorable Ernest F. Hollings, Senator (South Carolina)
Chair, Commerce Committee
The Honorable Joseph R. Bidden, Senator (Delaware)
Commerce Committee*

Gentlemen:

The inequities herein described are trivial. The significant issue is we are victims of a spirit derived and born of a principle which asserts that cable competition is not to our advantage in this small Georgia community; and in other small communities-- and in other large communities. I believe that principle to be wrong. It is my earnest hope that it will be tested shortly in an appropriate forum and that the principle will be rejected. If not, it will then be up to our legislative arm to guarantee that the spirit of S-12 will be nurtured to focus on more consumers of service, like us.

B. P.

Bill Parsons

cc:

*Hart County Commissioners - Hart County, Georgia 30643
Honorable Albert Gore, U. S. Senate Washington, D.C. 20510
The Honorable Sam Nunn, U. S. Senate Washington D.C. 20510
The Honorable Don Johnson, U. S House of Rep. Washington, D.C. 20515
The Honorable Edward Markey, U. S. House of Rep. Washington, D.C. 20515*

The Honorable John D. Dingle, U. S. House of Rep. Washington, D.C. 20515
The Honorable Jack Brooks, U. S. House of Rep. Washington, D.C. 20515
The Honorable Ernest F. Hollings, U. S. Senate Washington, D.C. 20510
The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, U. S. Senate Washington, D.C. 20510
Ms. Phyllis Shethonlyphyllissintheoffice, USA Cablesystems
Mr. Doug Hestheonlydougintheoffice, USA Cablesystems